A

SERMON

Preached

J. F.
Suprema
Optima

December 3. 1678.

By a Reverend Divine of the
Church of ENGLAND.

Printed in the Year, 1679.

RB24789

Joh. 13. 34, 35.

A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

AS the Christian Religion in general is the best Philosophy and the most virtuous Institution of all, containing in it the most intire and compleat systeme of moral rules and precepts that was ever yet extant in the world; so it particularly excells in the Doctrine of Love and Charity, earnestly recommending, strictly enjoyning, vehemently and often expressing and inculcating the excellency and necessity of the best of Graces and Virtues, and propounding to us for our imitation and encouragement the most lively and heroick example of Kindness and Charity that ever was, in the life and death of the great Founder of our Religion, *the Author and Finisher of our faith, Jesus* the

Son of God. So that the Gospel as it hath in all other parts our duty cleared of the dimness and obscurity of natural light, and the clouds and imperfection of the former Revelations; so doth it most eminently reign and triumph in this great and blessed virtue of Charity, in which all the Philosophy and Religions that had been before in the world, whether Jewish or Pagan, were so remarkably defective. With great reason therefore doth our blessed Saviour call this *a new commandment*, and assert it to himself as a thing peculiar to his Doctrine and Religion, considering how seldom it was taught and how little it was practised in the world before. *A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

My discourse upon these words, through God's assistance and by your patience, shall be comprehended under these six heads.

1. I shall consider in what *sense* our Saviour calls this commandment of loving one another *a new commandment.*

2. I shall endeavour to declare the *nature* of this commandment, in instancing in the chief acts and properties of love.

3. I shall shew the *degrees* and measures of it with relation to the various objects about which it is to be exercised. And

4. Our *obligation* to it not only from our Saviours Authority, but from the reasonableness and excellency of this new commandment. And

5. I shall propound to you the great *example* which is here offered to our imitation, *as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

6. And lastly, We shall consider the *place* and *reference* which this precept holds in the Christian Religion. It is the proper badge, the distinctive mark and character of our profession; *by which all men shall know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

1. In what *sense* our Saviour calls this commandment of loving one another *a new commandment.* Not that it is absolutely and altogether new, but upon some special accounts: for it was observed by Pagans primitively, and *Aristotle* truly observes, "that upon the ground and "nature of things that have life, all men are "friends and kindly affected towards one ano-"ther. And it is a known precept of the Jewish Law, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.*

ſelf. In ſome ſenſe then it is no new commandment. And ſo St. *John* (who was moſt likely to know our Saviours mind, and all whoſe preaching and writings is nothing elſe but the inculcating this one precept) doth explain this matter, telling us, that in ſeveral reſpects it was, and was not, a new commandment, 1 Joh. 2. 7, 8. *Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning*; that is, from antient time. But then he corrects himſelf again, *but yet a new commandment I write unto you.* So that though it was not abſolutely new, yet upon divers conſiderable accounts it was in a peculiar manner proper to the Chriſtian Inſtitution. Therefore it is ſo peculiarly aſcribed to the teaching of Gods Spirit that is conferr'd upon Chriſtians by our Goſpel. 1 Theſſ. 4. 9. *But if ye continue in brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye your ſelves are* θεοδίδακτοι, *divinely taught and inſpired to love one another.* This commandment then of loving one another is ſo much enlarged as to the *object* of it, beyond what either the Jews or Pagans did underſtand, and *extent*, reaching to all mankind and to our very enemies; ſo greatly advanced and heightned as to the *degree* of it, even to require the laying down of our lives for one another; it is ſo effectually taught, ſo very much forced and inculcated by our Saviour, that it may be very well

well called *a new commandment*. For though it was not unknown to mankind before, yet it was never ſo taught, ſo inculcated, never was ſuch an example given of it, never ſo much ſtreſs and weight laid upon it, by all the Philoſophy or Religion that was ever before in the world: I proceed in the

2. place, To declare to you the *nature* of this commandment, or the duty which is required by it, and that will beſt be done by inſtancing in the chief acts and properties of Charity. As, humanity and kindneſs in all our carriage and behaviour towards one another; Love ſmooths the diſpoſitions of men. Next, rejoycing in the good and happineſs of one another, and grieving at their evils and ſufferings: for love unites the intereſts of men, ſo as to make us affected with what happens to another, as if it were in ſome ſort our own caſe. And then to contribute as much as in us lyes to the happineſs of one another, by relieving one anothers wants and redreſſing their grievances. Again, tenderneſs of their good name and reputation, a proneneſs to interpret all words and actions to the beſt ſenſe. Patience and forbearance towards one another, and when differences happen, to manage them with all poſſible calmneſs and kindneſs; and to be ready to forgive and to be reconciled to one another. To pray for one another,

and if occasion be, at least if the publick good of Christianity require it, to be ready to lay down our lives for the Brethren, and so sacrifice our selves for the furtherance of their salvation.

3. We shall consider the *different degrees* and measures of charity with relation to the various objects towards which it is to be exercised. And as to the negative part of this duty, it is to be equally extended towards all. We are not to hate or bear any ill will to any man, or do him any injury. *Love worketh no evil to his neighbour.* And this Charity we are to exercise towards all without any exception, without any difference. And as to the positive part of this duty, we should bear an universal kindness to all men, wish every mans happiness, and pray for it as heartily as for our own, and be ready upon all occasions to procure and promote the wellfare of all. But acts of Charity neither can be extended to all, nor ought to be to all alike; we do not know the wants of all, and therefore our knowledge or rather our ignorance must necessarily bound the effects of our charity within a certain compass, and of those we do know, we can but relieve a small part for want of ability. Therefore we must set some rules for the handsome discreet ordering of our charity. First, those of most extremity ought to take place of all others. Objects of nature and near-

neſs of relation ſeem to challenge the next place. Former kindneſſes and benefits received, claim the next room. And then the houſhold of faith. And after theſe, the merit of the perſons and all circumſtances belonging to them are to be conſidered. Thoſe who labour in an honeſt calling, but are at a great deal of charges; thoſe who are fallen from a plentiful eſtate by misfortune and the providence of God without their own fault; thoſe who have relieved others, and been eminently charitable and beneficial to mankind: theſe do all challenge our more eſpecial regard and conſideration. And laſtly, thoſe who by reaſon of their infirmities do call for more than ordinary pity and charity.

4. We ſhall conſider our *obligations* to this duty, not only from our Saviours authority, but from the reaſonableneſs and excellency of the thing commanded. This is the commandment of the Son of God, who came down from Heaven to declare the will of God to us. And this is peculiarly his command which he preſſes ſo earneſtly upon his Diſciples, as if he required nothing elſe in compariſon of this. In St. *John* 15. 12. *This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you.* And at ver. 17. *Theſe things I command you, that ye love one another.* All his Doctrine ſeems to tend to this, to love one another. And ſo

St. *John* ſpeaks of it as the great meſſage that the Son of God was to deliver to mankind, in the 1 *Ep.* St. *John* 3. 11. *For this is the meſſage that ye heard from the beginning, that we ſhould love one another.* And at verſ. 23. *This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and love one another as he gave us commandment.* In Chap. 4. 21. *This commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother alſo.* But beſides the Authority of our Saviour, we have a precedent obligation from our nature, and from the reaſonableneſs and excellency of the thing it ſelf. The frame of our nature diſpoſes us to it, and our inclination to Society, in which there can be no pleaſure, no advantage, without mutual love and charity. Equity calls for it: that we our ſelves do wiſh and expect kindneſs from others, is conviction enough to any man that he owes it to others. It is the advancement and perfection of our natures, the enlargement of our ſouls, the chief ornament and beauty of a great mind. It makes us like to God, the beſt and moſt perfect and happieſt Being in the world, and in that which is the prime excellency and happineſs and perfection of the divine nature. The advantages of this temper are unſpeakably numerous. It preſerves the ſoul from thoſe unruly and troubleſome and diſquieting paſſions

which

which are the great torment of mens Spirits, from anger and envy, malice and revenge, jealousie and discontent. It makes our minds lively and cheerful, puts us into a good humour and our spirits into an easie posture, and makes us capable of possessing and enjoying our selves. It preserves men from the many miseries and inconveniences to which enmity and ill-will do inevitably expose them. It makes them friends to God and one another, and renders every condition either pleasant, or easie, or tolerable to us: so that to love others is the truest love to our selves, and doth redound to our own unspeakable benefit and advantage. In all respects it is a very considerable part of our duty, most acceptable to God, most beneficial to others, and most comfortable to our selves. And it is the easiest of all duties, and it makes all others easie. The pleasure of it makes the pains to signifie nothing; the delightful reflection upon it afterwards is a most admirable satisfaction. It is a duty which every man ought to perform, how strait and indigent soever his fortune and condition be: the poorest man may be as charitable as a Prince, he may have as much kindness in his heart, though his hand can't be so bountiful and benign. Our Saviour instances in *a cup of cold water* as a charity that will be highly accepted and rewarded by God; and one of the most celebrated charities that ever

was, how ſmall was it for the matter of it, and yet how great in regard of the mind that gave it? I mean the *two mites* that ſhe caſt into the Treaſury. One could hardly give leſs, and yet no body could give more: for ſhe gave all that ſhe had. All theſe excellencies and advantages of love and charity are ſo many powerful arguments, ſo many ſtrong obligations to the practice of this duty.

5. We ſhall conſider the great *inſtance*, and *example* that is here propounded to our imitation. *As I have loved you, that ye alſo love one another.* The Son of Gods becoming man, his whole life, his bitter death and paſſion, all that he did in the world and all that he ſuffer'd, was one great and continued proof and evidence of his great love to mankind: The greateſt inſtance of love among men, and that too but very rare, is, *for a man to lay down his life for his friend:* but the Son of God dyed for all mankind, and we were all his enemies. And to make men cheerfully imitate the example of that love and charity, the effects whereof are ſo comfortable and ſo beneficial to every one of us, had not he loved us and dyed for us, we had inevitably periſhed, we had been miſerable and undone to all eternity. To perpetuate this great example, and that it might alwayes be freſh in our memory, the great Sacrament

of

of our Religion was purpoſely inſtituted, for the commemoration of the great love of the Son of God in laying down his life and ſhedding his blood for the wicked and rebellious race of mankind. But I have not time to enlarge upon this argument as it deſerves. I come in the

6. place, To conſider *the place* and *reference* which this great precept and duty here required by Our Saviour holds in the Chriſtian Religion. He makes it the proper badge and character of his Diſciples, *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye love one another.* The different Sects among the Jews had ſome peculiar character to diſtinguiſh them from one anothers diſciples; moſt of the great Rabbies among them had ſome Saying, ſome Opinions or ſome Traditions whereby they were known from one another; and ſo the diſciples of *John Baptiſt* were remarkable for their faſting and praying. In alluſion to theſe diſtinctions of Sects and Schools among the Jews our Saviour fixes upon this mark and character whereby his diſciples ſhould be known from the diſciples of any other Inſtitution, a mighty love and affection to one another. Other Sects were diſtinguiſhed by opinions, or ſome external Rites and Ceremonies of Religion; but our Saviour pitches upon that which is of another nature,

the

the most large and comprehensive, the most useful and beneficial, the most humane and most divine quality that men are capable of. This was his *great commandment* to his disciples before he left the world, this was his last legacy to them, and this was the effect of his last prayer for them, and for this end among others he instituted the Sacrament of his blessed Body and Blood, for a lively and continual remembrance of his charity to all men, and for a perpetual bond of love and union among his Followers. And the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour recommend this to us as the principal part of our Religion, telling us, that in Christ Jesus, that is, in the Christian Religion, nothing will avail, no not Faith it self, unless it be inliven'd and inspired by this Charity: That this is *the end of the Commandment*, τέλος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, the end of the Evangelical declaration; That it is *the first-fruit of the Spirit*; the spring and root of all those graces and virtues which concern our duty towards one another; That it is the sumin and abridgement, the accomplishment and *fulfilling of the whole Law*; That without this, whatever men may pretend to in Christianity, they are nothing and their *Religion is vain*; That this is the greatest of all graces, greater than faith and hope, and of most lasting use and duration, for *charity never fails*. Exhorting us

above

above all things to endeavour after it as the crown of all other virtues. *Above all things have fervent charity among your ſelves*, ſaith St. *Peter*. And St. *Paul* having enumerated ſeveral other Chriſtian virtues, exhorts us above all to endeavour after it, *But above all theſe things put on charity which is the bond of perfectneſs*. And this, St. *John* makes the moſt certain ſign of love to God, *If a man ſay, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* And the ſame Apoſtle makes it the principal evidence that we are in a ſtate of Grace and Salvation. *By this* (ſaith he) *we know that we have paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the Brethren*. So that well might our Saviour chooſe this for the badge of his diſciples, and make it the great precept of the beſt and moſt perfect Chriſtianity. Other things might tend more to oſtentation, but nothing in the world is of more real advantage. And in the firſt Ages of Chriſtianity, Chriſtians were very remarkable for this grace and virtue, and particularly, *Nobis, &c.* ſaith *Tertullian*, "It is ſet upon us as a brand or mark. And it was proverbially ſaid by the Heathens, "See how theſe Chriſtians love one

"another.

"another. *Lucian* acknowledges that this was the great principle which their Master had instilled into them. And *Julian*, the bittereſt Enemy that Chriſtianity ever had, doth yet propound to the Heathens for an Example the charity of the *Galilæans*, for ſo he called the Chriſtians by way of reproach, "who, "(ſayes he) give up themſelves to humanity "and charity, to the great advantage and Re-"putation of their Religion. Nay, he acknowledges (for the charity of the Chriſtians was ſo general that it was not limitted and confined to themſelves) in that famous paſſage of his in his Letter to the High Prieſt of *Galatia*, "It is a ſhame (ſayes he) "that when the Jews ſuffer none of theirs "to begg, and the *Galilæans* relieve not only "their own but thoſe of our Religion, that "we only ſhould be ſo defective in ſo neceſ-"ſary a virtue. By all which you ſee that love and charity is not only the great precept of our Saviour, but was in thoſe firſt and beſt times the general practice of his Diſciples, and acknowledged by Heathens as a very peculiar and remarkable quality in them. *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if you love one another.*

And

And now I have done with those six particulars which I propounded to speak to from these words. The *Application* which I shall make of this discourse shall be threefold. 1. With relation to the Church of *Rome*: 2. In reference to our selves who profess the Reformed Protestant Religion. 3. And more particularly with relation to the occasion of this present meeting.

1. With relation to the Church of *Rome*, which we cannot chuse but think of, whenever we speak of Charity and love to one another, especially having had so late a discovery of their affection to us, and so considerable a testimony of the kindness and Charity which they design towards us all, such as may justly make the ears of every one that hears it to tingle, and render Popery a frightful and an hateful thing to the end of the world. It is now but too visible how grosly this great commandment of our Saviour is contradicted not only by the practices of those in that communion, from the Pope down to the meanest Priest, but by the very Doctrines and principles, the genius and spirit of that Religion, which is calculated for cruelty and persecution. Where is that mark of a Disciple

ſo much inſiſted on by our Lord and Maſter, to be found in that Church? And yet what is the Chriſtian Church but the ſociety and community of Chriſts Diſciples? And then ſurely in all reaſon that which Chriſt made the diſtinguiſhing mark and character of his diſciples, ſhould be the diſtinguiſhing mark of a true Church. *Bellarmine* reckons up, I think, no leſs than fifteen marks of a true Church, all which the Church of *Rome* arrogates to her ſelf; but he wiſely forgot that which is worth all the reſt; and which our Saviour inſiſts upon in chief of all others, ſincere love and charity to all Chriſtians. This he knew would by no means agree to his Church. But I think that it is as reaſonable that a whole Church, as that particular Chriſtians, ſhould be judged of by their charity. The Church of *Rome* would ingroſs all Faith to her ſelf, Faith in its utmoſt perfection, to the point and pitch of Infallibility, and it will allow no body in the world beſide her ſelf (no, though they believe all the Articles of the Apoſtles Creed), to have one grain of true Faith, becauſe forſooth they don't believe upon the Authority of their Church, which they pretend to be the only foundation of Faith. This certainly is a moſt vain and arrogant pretence: but admit it were true,

yet

yet in the judgement of St. *Paul, though they had all faith, yet if they have no charity, they are nothing.* The greateſt wonder of all is, that they who are ſo deſtitute of charity, who hate and perſecute Chriſtians moſt, do all this while moſt confidently of all others pretend to be the Diſciples of Chriſt, and will allow none in the world to be ſo but themſelves. That Church that excommunicates all other Chriſtian Churches in the World, and if ſhe could would extirpate them out of the world, will needs aſſume to her ſelf to be the true Chriſtian Church, as if our Saviour had ſaid, *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my Diſciples, if you* hate, and excommunicate, and kill *one another. What ſhall be done unto thee thou falſe tongue,* thou empty and impudent pretence of Chriſtianity?

2. I ſhall apply this *with relation to our ſelves* who profeſs the Reformed Proteſtant Religion. And how is this great precept of our Saviour not only denyed but plainly violated by us, and that not only by private hatred and envy, quarrels and contentions, in our ordinary converſe and intercouſe with one another, but by thoſe unchriſtian diviſions and animoſities in that common relation wherein we ſtand to one another, as Brethren and

Christians and Protestants? Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? And are we not in a more peculiar and eminent manner brethren, being all Children of God by faith in Christ Jesus? Are we not members of the same body, and partakers of the same Spirit, and Heirs of the same blessed hope of eternal life? so that being brethren upon so many accounts, and united by so many bonds and endearments, and all travelling towards the same heavenly Countrey, why do we *fall out by the way, since we are Brethren?* Why do we not as becomes brethren *dwell together in unity*, but are so apt to quarrel and break out into heats, and crumble into sects and parties, to divide and separate from one another upon every slight and trifling occasion?

Give me leave to expostulate this matter calmly and in the spirit of meekness, and in the name of our dear Lord who loved us all at such a rate as to dye for us, to recommend to you this new commandment of his, *that we love one another*; which is almost a *new* commandment still, and hardly the worse for wearing, so seldom hath it been put on and so little practised by Christians for so many ages. Consider seriously with your selves,

Ought

Ought not the great matters wherein we are agreed, our union in the great Doctrines of Christianity, and in all the necessary Articles of that *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*, in all the substantial parts of Gods worship, and all the duties and virtues of the Christian life, to be of greater force to unite us, than difference in doubtful opinions, and in little rites and circumstances of worship, to divide and break us? Are not the things about which we differ, in their nature dubious, that is, things about which there ought to be no difference among wise men? Are they not at a great distance from the life and essence of Religion, and either good or bad as they tend to the peace and unity of the Church, or are made use of to Schism and Faction, neither necessary nor evil in themselves? And shall little scruples weigh so far with us, as by breaking the peace of our Church to endanger our whole Religion? shall we for an hundred pence take one another by the throats, when our common Adversary stands ready to clap upon us an Action of ten thousand Talents? Can we be in good earnest contented, rather than the Surplice should not be thrown out, Popery should be brought in; and rather than receive the Sacrament in the humble, but yet indifferent

posture

posture of kneeling, to swallow the Camel of Transubstantiation and adore the Elements of Bread and Wine for our God and Saviour? and rather than submit to a set form of Prayer, to have the service of God performed in an unknown tongue? Are we not yet made sensible at least in this our day, by so clear a demonstration as the providence of God hath lately given us, and which had not he been merciful to us had proved the dearest and dangerousest experiment that ever was; I say, are we not yet satisfied, what mighty advantages our enemies have made by our divisions, and what a plentiful harvest they have found among us during our differences and upon the account of them, and how near their Religion was to have entred upon us at once at those breaches which we had opened for them? Let us by this take a late warning, and keep an eye upon our chief interest, and not suffer our selves to be diverted from the consideration of our greatest danger by the slight provocations of our *Friends*; so I chuse to call those who dissent from us in lesser things, because I would fain have them so, and they ought in all reason to be so. And however they may behave themselves towards us, we ought not to mind those that fling dirt at us, whilest we are sure there are others

that

that flye at our throats, and ſtrike too at our very hearts. Let us learn this wiſdom of our enemies, who though they have many great differences among themſelves, yet they have made a ſhift to unite together to deſtroy us, and ſhall not we do as much to ſave our ſelves? *Fas eſt & ab hoſte doceri.*

It was a principle among the Romans in caſes of common danger, to give up and ſacrifice their private enmities and quarrels to promote the good and ſafety of the Commonwealth. And is it not to every conſiderate man, as clear as the Sun at Noon day, that nothing can maintain and ſupport the Proteſtant Religion, and found it upon a rock, ſo that when *the rains fall and the winds blow and the floods beat upon it*, it ſhall *remain firm* and unſhaken: That nothing can be a Bulwark of ſufficient force to reſiſt all the arts and attempts of Popery, but an eſtabliſhed National Religion, firmly united and compacted in all the parts of it? Is it not plain to every eye, that little Sects and ſeparate Congregations can never do well, but will be like a foundation of ſand to a weighty building, which what ſhow ſoever it make, cannot ſtand long, becauſe it wants union at the foundation, and for that reaſon muſt neceſſa-

rily want ſtrength? It is not for private perſons to undertake in matter of publick concern; but we have no cauſe now, for the Governours of our Church, notwithſtanding all the advantages of Authority and (we think) of reaſon too on our ſide, are of that piety and prudence, that for peace ſake and in order to a firm union among Proteſtants, they would be contented if that would do it, not to inſiſt upon leſſer things, but yield them up either to the infirmity, or the importunity, or perhaps in ſome few things to the plauſible exceptions of thoſe who differ from us. But then ſurely on the other ſide men ought to bring along with them a peaceable diſpoſition, and a mind ready to comply with the Church they were born in, in all reaſonable and lawful things, and deſirous to return to the communion of it; a mind free from paſſion and prejudice, from pieviſh exceptions, and groundleſs and endleſs fears, not apt to inſiſt upon little trifles and objections, to which the very beſt things, and the cleareſt and greateſt truths in the world, are and alwayes will be lyable. And whatever there be therefore, that *henceforth we be no longer Children toſt to and fro and carryed about by every wind of Doctrine, by the ſlights of men, and the cunning and craftineſs of thoſe who lye in wait to deceive*

ceive us. If we would govern our ſelves by theſe rules, and walk according to them, *peace would be upon us and upon the Iſrael of God.*

I ſhall conclude all with a few words *in relation to the occaſion of this preſent meeting.* I have all this while been recommending to you this great truth from the Authority and example of our bleſſed Saviour, and from the nature and reaſon of the thing, in all the proper acts and inſtances of it. But beſide particular acts of charity to be exerciſed upon emergent occaſions, there are likewiſe charitable cuſtomes which are highly commendable, becauſe they are of a much larger extent and longer continuance; as, the meeting of the Sons of the Clergy, which is now eſtabliſhing into a charitable Corporation; an anniverſary meeting for the ſeveral Counties of *England,* for the excellenteſt and nobleſt ends that can be poſſible, the maintaining of friendſhip and the promoting of charity. Theſe I call charitable cuſtomes, which of late years have much obtained in this great City. And what honeſt man would not rejoyce to ſee ſo generous and commendable a diſpoſition to prevail and reign ſo among us, when the overflowing of vice and wickedneſs amongſt us, the contagious increaſe of all im-

pudence and impiety of late years hath boded very ill to it, and brought fearful judgements upon this sinful Nation, and seems to threaten more? The greatest comfort that I have had under the apprehension of Gods displeasure towards us hath been this, that though bad men were never worse in any time, yet the good (who I hope are not a few) were never more truly and substantially good. I believe there were never in any time greater and more real effects of charity, and that not through a blind superstition and an ignorant zeal and a mercenary impression of their *merit*, but from sound knowledge and sincere obedience and love to God, or as the Apostle describes it, *out of a pure heart and good conscience and of faith unfeigned.* And who that loves God and Religion can chuse but take great contentment to see so generous and forward a disposition in people this way, which of late hath been very much nourished by us to very good purposes and effects, and many charitable deeds done in the best and noblest way, and hath likewise many times tended to the reconciling the minds of men, and allaying the heats and animosities which have been caused by our Civil confusions and Religious distractions: for there is nothing many times wanting to take away prejudice and to extinguish hatred and ill will, but

an opportunity for men to converſe together and to underſtand one another, by which they will quickly perceive that they are not ſuch Monſters as they have been repreſented to one another. We are then one of the laſt Counties of *England* that have entred into this friendly and charitable kind of ſociety. Let us make amends for our late ſetting out by the quickning of our pace, that we may overtake and outſtrip thoſe that have gone before us. Let not our Charity partake of the coldneſs of our Climate, but as we are by computation the largeſt County in *England*, let it appear that we are ſo by the greatneſs and largeneſs of our Charity.

FINIS